NOTES AND TRANSLATIONS

Psalm 42, Op. 42 | Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

II. “Meine Seele dürstet nach Gott“

My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When will I reach the place where I will behold God's countenance?

*“*Meine Seele dürstet nach Gott“ conveys a profound spiritual longing for God, echoing the yearning of those left behind by the tragedies of war. The speaker’s plea to see the face of the heavenly God closely reflects the human desire to be reunited with lost loved ones, allowing this piece to serve as a spiritual reflection on loss, faith, and the enduring hope of reunion and remembrance.

– Jane Zelcer

III. “Meine Thräne sind meine Speise.....Denn ich wollte”

My tears are my meal, day and night, since daily they say to me:
"Where, now, is your God?"
When I look inward, I pour out my heart in solitude;

For I would gladly go with the crowd and make pilgrimage to the House of God,
with rejoicing and thanksgiving among the crowd who celebrate there.

It is an emphasis of deep longing to return to a source of comfort and identity which reflects the essence of remembrance. Mendelssohn’s setting of the text searches for God in times of collective human ache and relentlessly outlines the journey of rediscovering humanity in the midst of despair.

– Emma Puscalau

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris (Gloria, RV 588) | Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741)

You who sits at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.

As the Latin text pleads for mercy from an intermediary to a divine authority, I solemnly remember the countless lives lost to senseless violence as a result of Western imperialism and greed.

– Mona Subramani

The Call (Five Mystical Songs) | Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life: Such a Way, as gives us breath:
Such a Truth, as ends all strife: Such a Life, as killeth death.
Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength: Such a Light, as shows a feast:
Such a Feast, as mends in length: Such a Strength, as makes his guest.
Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart: Such a Joy, as none can move:
Such a Love, as none can part: Such a Heart, as joys in love.

“The Call” so beautifully captures the feeling of remembrance through its tender, thoughtful melody and reflective text, inviting the listener to answer a higher power and eternal summons. The music’s serene, touching tone evokes the pain of loss and enduring peace that is found in memory. We are reminded to honour and remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice and answered the ultimate call of service.

– Eyal Stopnicki-Udokang

Ave Maria, Op. 9 | Joaquín Turina (1882–1949)

Hail Mary, full of grace,
The Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.

Ave Maria - a prayer known and cherished by millions around the world; spoken in countless languages yet united through the voice of faith. Every time it is recited, believers are encouraged to stop and reflect on Mary's courage, God's love, and the importance of seeking forgiveness; remembering that even in wrongdoing, we are not forgotten. The spirit of Remembrance Day can be tied to Ave Maria: a time to reflect on those who have fallen, but keep love and faith despite hardship.

– Ana Paolina Garcia Flores

Sancta Maria (Litaniae Lauretanae) | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Holy Mary, pray for us.
Holy Mother of God, Holy Virgin of virgins,
Pray for us.
Mother of Christ, Mother of the Church, Mother of divine grace,
Pray for us.
Mother most pure, Mother most chaste, Mother inviolate, Mother undefiled,
Pray for us.

Mozart's "Sancta Maria" demonstrates how people throughout history have engaged in worship and prayers as pillars of hope in times of conflict and war. Throughout the piece, the singer is repeatedly asking the Virgin Mary to "pray for us", reminding us on this day to think of those who have passed during times of war as well as for those who are still facing violence and conflict today.

– Isla Parekh

Virgam virtutis (Dixit Dominus, RV 595) | Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741)

The sceptre of your power the Lord shall send forth from Zion:
Rule thou in the midst of your enemies.

The text of the aria illustrates the importance of remembrance by emphasizing the hope that the weak and oppressed will eventually be liberated. On this important day of honouring sacrifices made by those who served, we as a society rejoice in the hope that justice will triumph over evil. The repeated melismas highlight the word "inimicorum" (enemy), which allows people to have faith in knowing that God's strength will always rule in the midst of enemies.

– Cheuk Yan Leung

Author of Peace (Saul, HWV 53) | Georg Friederic Handel (1685–1759)

Author of peace, who canst control
Every passion of the soul;
To whose good spirit alone we owe
Words that sweet as honey flow:
With thy dear influence his tongue be fill'd,
And cruel wrath to soft persuasion yield.

A prayer to the divine for the soul's stillness, "Author of Peace" turns wrath into persuasion and bitterness into light. It calls us to speak with compassion and to let peace be our lasting answer.

– Lindsay Faulkner

Maria Magdalena (Lukaspassionen, Op. 92) | Rolf Martinsson (b. 1956)

Mary Magdalene, hears the powerful men.
Word is going around town that she walks when the hours are late.
Mary Magdalene, Mary Magdalene
In all the streets of the city,
Mary Magdalene walks, and hears the same powerful men, when the hours are late.
Mary Magdalene, she is hiding in the night, and walking in all the alleys.
The hours are late.
Mary Magdalene, when the night never turns,
Mary Magdalene walks in the shadow of men, then flees the city of power.
The hours are late.
Mary Magdalene, takes on the darkness of men, and she, the light, carries its shadow.
The hours are late.

This piece is the expression of hope in the face of darkness. The bleak tonality brightens as the warmth evoked by new melodic material reminds us to find the light. To do that we must remember that through the struggle and sacrifice of others, those left behind can look to the future and the pursuit of change.

– Marina Kadri

Agnus Dei
(Missa Cellensis in honorem Beatissimae Virginis Mariae: Cäcilienmesse) | F. J. Haydn (1732–1809)

Lamb of God, you that takes away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

Agnus Dei explores the universal truth that, as humans, we all make mistakes, however, we are not defined by our mistakes as long as we seek genuine forgiveness. It's possible to receive the same compassion which should be given to anyone who seeks inner peace. The text reminds us that we all long for peace and forgiveness, no matter who we are. The final plea, "give us eternal rest," echoes the hope and reason of Remembrance Day-through compassion and remembrance, we can strive for lasting peace.

– Cameron Boulter

Ach seht, der allen wohlgetan **(Das Sühnopfer des neuen Bundes)** | Carl Loewe (1796–1869)

Ah see, He who has brought good to all suffers shame,
He is mocked, a purple garment is put upon him;
He is crowned with thorns.
They spit into his face;
They scourge him with sharp rods, O Israel,
Do you not tremble before the fire of your God's anger?

"Ach seht, der allen wohlgetan" from Carl Loewe's 1847 Passion Oratorio "Der Sühnopfer des neuen Bundes" (The Expiatory Sacrifice of the New Covenant) reminds me of the awe of the religious sacrifice of the crucifixion that Jesus endured for the sins of humanity and the faith and commitment that Christians have to repent and redeem because of this act.

– Lily Pearson

Fac ut portem (Stabat Mater) | Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710–1736)

Grant that I may bear the death of Christ;
Make me a sharer in His Passion
And ever mindful of His wounds.
Let me be wounded by his wounds,
Cause me to be inebriated by the love of your Son.

“Fac ut portem, Christi mortem” transforms personal grief into a shared act of compassion and remembrance. As we honour those who have fallen, the aria’s solemn plea reminds us to bear their sacrifice with humility and gratitude, keeping their memory alive through music and reflection.

– Trinity Turino

Crucifixus (Messa di Gloria [Messa a Quattro Voci]) | Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924)

Crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate,
He suffered and was buried.

Giacomo Puccini’s Crucifixus is a powerful reminder of human suffering and sacrifice, inviting us to reflect on the emotional weight of remembrance. As the piece contemplates the crucifixion of Christ, it also calls us to honour the memory of those we have lost and the sacrifices they made.

– Adam Przyjemski

O knowing, glorious Spirit (The World of the Spirit) | Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

O knowing glorious Spirit!
When Thou shalt restore trees, beasts and men,
When Thou shalt make all new, new again,
Destroying only death and pain,
Give him amongst Thy works a place
Who in them loved and sought Thy face!

In “O Knowing, Glorious Spirit,” Britten’s soaring vocal lines and expressive harmonies invite space for quiet reflection. The seeker’s plea for divine understanding is a path to remembrance, honoring the courage and selflessness of those who gave their lives for others.

– Kaela Peever

Laudamus te (Mass in c minor, K. 427) | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

We praise thee. We bless Thee.
We worship Thee. We glorify Thee.

The text of this piece was originally written as praise to God, today I sing the text in remembrance and gratitude for all those who sacrificed for our freedom. With freedom becoming increasingly at risk, I feel it is as important as ever to remember our history so that we do not repeat it.

– Emma Lavigne

Nun sterb ich Sünder nicht (Ein Lämmlein geht und trägt die Schuld) | G. A. Homilius (1714–1785)

Now I don't die, a sinner,
The father wants to forgive,
The Son goes to court,
To free myself from the curse.
How shall I, father,
Exalt you and your Son?
My whole heart rejoices,
I shall not see death!

This upbeat and celebratory aria depicts a sinner who knows that they are going to be forgiven by God, and that Jesus will come to save them from Judgement. It is a reminder and celebration of the fact that one will be remembered for the good they have done in life, rather than their sins.

– Monica Lindsay

Ananias! Stehe auf… Ich danke dir, Herr mein Gott (Paulus) | Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Ananias, get up!
Ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying.
This man is my chosen instrument.
I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.

I am thankful, O Lord my God, with all my heart;
For great is your Goodness toward me;
You have saved my soul from the depths of Hell.

This piece illustrates the remembrance of a life past - St. Paul thanking the Lord for enlightenment from his past life. Using motivic repetition, Mendelssohn affirms the words of Paul, encouraging the remembrance of the powerful statement “Ich danke dir, Herr mein Gott”.

– Vikram Srinivas

O Jesu Christ, der litt ein Leben lang (Prayers of Kiekegaard, Op. 30) | S. Barber (1910–1981)

Lord Jesus Christ, who suffered life-long
That I too might be saved,
And Whose suffering still has not passed.
This too, You still endure: my Saviour and Redeemer,
To tolerate someone like me that you have here in front of you,
I who so often go astray.
Lord Jesus Christ!

With these words, let us remember all who have suffered for our freedoms. We are humbled by their sacrifice and inspired by their success, so we, too, may persevere through hardship.

– Lauren Fajardo

Laudamus te
(Missa Cellensis in honorem Beatissimae Virginis Mariae: Cäcilienmesse) | F. J. Haydn (1732–1809)

We praise thee. We bless Thee.
We worship Thee. We glorify Thee.

Haydn's "Laudamus Te" speaks to timeless themes of joy, celebration, and glorification that endure through hardship. In times of darkness, it is the memory of past joys that gives us hope to persevere: whether it be a deity who seems removed or a person we've lost, remembering the ardour we had for them allows us to continue to trust that they are with us.

– Muriel Falkenstein

Dona Nobis Pacem | Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

I. Agnus Dei

Lamb of God, you that takes away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

In Vaughan Williams' Dona Nobis Pacem, the Agnus Dei is not only a prayer for peace but a voice of all who have suffered, begging for peace. On this day of remembrance, I hope we all take a moment and reflect on the past, and have a helping hand to the innocent suffering from genocide across the world.

– Claire Jun

III. Reconciliation

Word over all, beautiful as the sky,
Beautiful that war and all its deeds of carnage must in time be utterly lost;
Death and Night incessantly, softly, wash again and ever again,
This soiled world.
For my enemy is dead,
A man divine as myself is dead,
I look where he lies white-faced and still in the coffin.
I draw near,
Bend down and touch lightly with my lips the white face in the coffin.

Word over all, beautiful as the sky,
Beautiful that war and all its deeds of carnage must in time be utterly lost;
Death and Night incessantly, softly, wash again and ever again,
This soiled world.

Grant us peace.

"Reconciliation" from Vaughan Williams's Dona Nobis Pacem brings to my mind the cycle of violence, and the hope that a new generation, when given enough time, could be the one to end it. Ultimately the main thing the aria brings to light is that nothing will change until we can see the humanity and divinity within ourselves and within others, before it is too late.

– Lucas Kalechstein